

**MINUTES**  
**Bar Harbor Cruise Ship Task Force**  
**Thursday January 22, 2009**  
**Council Chambers**  
**Municipal Building**  
**93 Cottage Street**

**I. Call to Order at 8:34 AM**

*Members present: Paul Paradis, Chair; Chris Fogg, Vice-Chair; Anne Krieg, Secretary; Nate Young; Fred Cook; Mary Opdyke; Bob Bahr; Charlie Phippen; George Seavey; Amy Powers; Greg Gordon*

**II. Excused Absences**

*There were none.*

**III. Minutes**

*Phippen moved with a second by Opdyke to approve the minutes with the edition noted below. All were in favor of the motion.*

- A. December 11, 2008**
- B. December 18, 2008**
- C. January 8, 2008 – modify date to 2009**

**IV. Adoption of agenda**

*Phippen moved, with a second from Young to accept the agenda as presented. All were in favor of the motion.*

**V. Staff Reports**

Young updated the group on the T105 facility plan.

Paradis will report to Council regarding any action from today.

Phippen reported that with the 2010 passenger cap, there will be 3 ships on one day in September 23<sup>rd</sup>. All 3 ships will be anchored. Anchorage A, and Anchorage B is behind Bar Island. B can take 2 ships. This 3 ship day will be the Norwegian Dawn, Crystal Symphony and Eurodam.

**VI. Regular Business**

- A. Continue discussion with Ocean Properties on future plans for West Street and service to Cruise Ship tenders and passengers.**

Ocean Properties was not present.

- B. Review of 2008 season**

- i. Passenger caps**

Greg Gordon discussed the situation of 2 large ships in the same day. There could be 6300 passengers, which would exceed the cap. He doesn't feel their operations as tour operators would be affected negatively. He would like to give Phippen the ability to allow 2 large cruise ships to come in.

Bahr responded that this was exactly what we wanted to avoid. The town did not want have 2 super ships in the harbor at once.

Seavey added that the number was chosen because that was the saturation point of what can be accommodated at the existing facility.

Gordon indicated that 3 or 4 buses are added to a super ship tour plan.

Phippen reminded the group Explorer of the Seas and a Norwegian ship was close to the cap; that was the basis of the recommendation for the passenger cap. He also added that the super ships don't want to come in at the same time with their scheduling and will ask who else is on the schedule when they come in. He does not want that discretion.

Paradis, Powers and Krieg confirmed the industry leaders have indicated they do not want to reduce passenger experience with congestion.

The ad hoc committee will review the season each year as per a previous recommendation once the task force is dissolved.

Powers noted that the town is trying to accommodate as many passengers as possible. Some cruise lines avoid being here when another ship is in. Phippen agreed.

Discussion ensued on splitting up the operation with the Ferry terminal and Harbor Place. It was noted that if the town does a T105 facility, that could also help accommodations.

Cook offered whether a ship could buy exclusivity to be the only ship in town. Group responded that this should be explored but there may be negative impacts to local businesses.

Fogg added that we need to evaluate the passenger experience with our caps. Places like Jordan Pond House and the top of Cadillac become beyond capacity.

Gordon said there are other buses; they do try to spread their tours around the island to not have a negative impact on a guest experience. There is a limit that is almost reached in the state of Maine of available motor coaches; noting they sometimes bring in buses from Boston.

## **ii. Operational problems**

Phippen stressed ongoing problems with tender operations, adding that education and Standard Operating Procedures needs to get to the cruise lines. He is working directly with the ships.

Paradis indicated the industry wants their ships to be compliant and wants to know when there are issues.

Seavey asked of Powers could be a conduit in her position.

Cook added that we should fine when there is an offense. A summons goes to the cruise line.

Phippen reviewed his current communication plan when there are problems.

Gordon reminded the group that issues with customs also affects operations and passenger experience.

Phippen added that there was a drop from foreign vessels. He thought that this may be good for local business as well as for passenger experience. 19 foreign ships for 09, this is a 21 ship reduction. The foreign ships will come from Canada.

Opdyke added that Thunder Hole is congested with a 2 ship day; this is not enjoyable for the passenger. Liz Weston added there are only 3 bus spaces and no plans for expansion. Same was true for top of Cadillac.

iii. Recommendations and items to report to Council

***Gordon moved to recommend extending the Harbormaster's discretion to allow 700 passengers in the fall season.***

***Young seconded for the purpose of discussion.***

Young added that it is premature to extend discretion. If economy, market and other variable change, we can revisit this allowance. This additional allowance can impact the overall visitation for the town. If land based tours decrease, then maybe we can do this.

Opdyke said we don't have bathrooms, maps and other accommodations.

***2 were in favor of the motion (Gordon, Powers), 9 opposed. Motion failed.***

Bahr concluded that there needs to be a mechanism to provide data and not anecdotal information.

Young noted that observations are not anecdotal. The town has continually responded as an ongoing commitment to accommodate the use.

Power needs to query the industry if they are looking for the super ships to come here at all.

Krieg will talk to UMaine to do a study for us as a neutral party.

C. Possible reconsideration of the following action taken December 18, 2008:

- i. ***On cruise ship days (only), West Street shall be made one-way from the Town Pier to the Main Street intersection. The parking spaces in Harborview Park shall be deemed a ground transportation area only. Two spaces in front of Harbor Place will be dedicated to information, pedestrian overflows and other public services. Phase II of this plan is recommended for further staff study to change the queuing to be parallel to the street and thus widen and open Harborview Park pedestrian spaces.***

Chair called for a motion for reconsideration. Krieg reviewed the plan.

***Opdyke moved to reconsider. Fogg seconded the motion.***

Young expressed that he does not want to reconsider. This was fully vetted and researched. We recognized the needs for taxi services for passengers.

Seavey had voted against the motion because he didn't understand the need for change.

Young reviewed the situation. Phippen agreed.

Paradis noted that the discretion to allow some standing of taxi's remains with the Police Chief.

Opdyke feels this is not cruise ship friendly to accommodate passenger needs. Young performed a point of order that Opdyke has a pecuniary interest in the outcome.

Fogg reminded the group that we need to serve the visitor.

Chair returned to the possible conflict of interest as defined in the ethics ordinance

***Phippen moved; with a second from Young that Opdyke recuse herself due to a special interest as defined in the town's ethics ordinance.***

***All were in favor of the motion.***

Opdyke sat with the public.

Krieg reviewed her intentions working on the plan. This will be for 2009, hopes to reduce congestion, signage will help passenger get to where they need to go.

Young added that the service is important to the passenger. A taxi cannot refuse the fare. Other private tours currently run their tours on private property. This plan was meant to accommodate taxi services.

Powers agreed that a formal ground transportation area and it needs to be separate enforced dedicated space.

Young gave a point of order that we are not debating the motion but whether we will reconsider.

***Cook made a motion with a second from Bahr to move the question. The motion passed with 2 opposed (Seavey, Fogg)***

***On the original motion to reconsider, 2 in were favor (Fogg, Seavey) and the remaining members opposed. Motion failed.***

Young noted that we could amend the motion to clarify the use of the spaces.

Seavey wants more comment on this.

***Young moved to clarify the uses for pick up and drop off areas that will be on a first come, first serve basis. Seavey seconded.***

Seavey gave his floor time to Claire Bingham. She stated the following points: 85% calls are dispatched, 15% are random cold calls, noting that they don't sit and wait for calls. The business is not flagged down by passengers but is dispatched as per Bar Harbor's rules. They call from the ramp or the ship for a taxi service. They arrange in advance so they don't have to randomly find a taxi, they want that assurance. They don't sit for cold calls.

Young responded that a designated area should be established on private property to accommodate them.

Phippen added that Enterprise and other tours were also considered for the area. He thinks this area can accommodate the dispatched usage.

Krieg agreed. Young agreed but cautioned that the monitoring the situation will be necessary with this dispatched allowance.

Bingham noted that a person can stand there and call a cab to come down when the party is there.

Paradis questioned if we should add 10 minutes to the length of time for standing.

This question was discussed at length.

*Young amended the motion to include a ten minute limit on standing at Harborview Park. Seavey agreed to amend the motion.*

*Fogg moved with a second from Krieg to move the question. All were in favor.*

*All were in favor of the motion.*

**D. Walking Map - Report from walking map sub-committee.**

No communication has returned from MaineDOT to print the maps.

Krieg noted that we cannot spend in anticipation of funds coming.

There is no update on the recycle bins. Council directed staff to work with Powers on moving this forward. Powers asked for price so she can go to the industry. Krieg will work with Chip on this.

**VII. Public Comment**

Krieg explained the purpose of the map in response to a question from Liz Weston.

Continual monitoring needs to be considered by a committee beyond the life of this task force. An ad hoc committee meets less frequently with a different reporting schedule should be considered for a recommendation in the future..

**VIII. Items for next agenda**

SOP address

**IX. Set next meeting time, date and place**

**A. 8:30am, February 5, 2009 in Council Chambers.**

**X. Adjournment at 10:32 AM by a motion from Opdyke and a second by Young**

*These minutes were prepared by Anne Krieg, Cruise Ship Study Task Force Secretary for distribution at the April 16, 2009 meeting.*